

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A semiconductor wafer examination system can accurately and reliably detects defects of semiconductor wafers. The semiconductor wafer examination system 1 comprises a defect classification device for automatically classifying defects of semiconductor wafers on the basis of defect detection parameters and a knowledge base and a classification support device for supporting the operation of the defect classification device. The defect detection parameters define the permissible deviation of the surface image of a defective semiconductor wafer from that of a normal semiconductor wafer. The knowledge base contains data for the types of defects that can occur in semiconductor wafers and data for showing the characteristics of each type. The classification support device prepares data on isolated defective areas that are used for selecting and/or altering the defect detection parameters and preparing the knowledge base.

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